GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2401
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2007
FACILITIES TO SOLDIERS
Jai Prakash Shri

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to provide world-class facilities particularly to those soldiers who are posted in difficult places so that the increasing cases of suicides among soldiers can be checked; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY)

(a)&(b) : Appropriate facilities and infrastructure are provided to the soldiers posted in difficult places. Improvement in facilities and infrastructure for making the working conditions of the soldiers especially in difficult areas, is an on-going process.Various measures that have been taken by the Government to reduce stress in the Armed Forces include:

(i) rotation of units and individuals to minimize exposure to stress situations;

(ii) liberalization of leave policy permitting splitting of casual leave and annual leave;

(iii) better man management and prompt attendance of grievances at unit level;

(iv) improved accessibility of leaders and frequent interaction of junior leaders with the soldiers;

(v) identification of religious teachers, JCOs of Army Education Corps and regimental Medical Officers as 'Psychological Health Mentors' at unit level and use of their services at different units;

(vi) training of 50 Junior Commissioned Officers from Army Medical Corps as Counsellors in Northern and Eastern Commands where troops are engaged in Counter Insurgency operations;

(vii) identification and counselling of persons who are at higher risk of combat stress by Regimental Medical Officers, junior leaders and Unit Commanders;

(viii) introduction of training capsules on relaxation exercise including Yoga and meditation; and

(ix) all Chief Ministers have been requested to make the civil administration more responsive to the problems of serving soldiers and their families.